

[Mrs. Sara (Lund) Bonney]

Interview

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MRS. SARA (LUND) BONNEY

IN WHOSE MIND A MUSEUM FOR ROSWELL ORIGINATED

TEACHER OF ROSWELL's FIRST SCHOOL.

Mrs. Sara (Lund) Bonney, wife of C. D. Bonney, was the first person to implant the idea of a Roswell Museum, in the minds of the members of the Chaves County [Archaeological?] and Historical Society.

Since the first day the idea was instituted, and actual building of the museum had begun, Mrs. Bonney has been a continual inspiration in the achievement of new plans, that have gradually developed onto one to the finest cultural institutions in Southeast New Mexico.

The fine Pueblo style building, that has materialized from Mrs. Bonney's original modest plans, of a one room inexpensive structure, now stands as a memorial to the early settlers, and is dedicated to the "Pioneers and Builders of Roswell". [C18 6/5/41 - N. Mex-?]

Mrs. Bonney herself, is one of the pioneers and outstanding builders, to whom a large share of honor is due. She has been treasurer of the Archaeological and Historical Society

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- that sponsored the building of the museum, thro'ugh all of the years since its organization in 1930. As one of the members of the building committee she worked untireingly untiringly with other faithful / members, 2 until the plans for the building were set in operation.

Mrs. Bonney realized that the valuable archaeological collection which she assisted in collecting - some of which were donated by the State Museum - now cared for and housed in the Roswell Museum, will be of much educational value for the citizens of Roswell and for future generations.

As the first teacher in the Roswell district, Mrs. Bonney - who was Sara Lund- besides implanting the seeds of knowledge in the minds of the children of the early settlers, encouraged their expression in the cultural arts. In music, drama, writing, and especially in [painting?] the art in which she has showed a [master?] hand, as proved by her fine work in portraiture and Indian life, that would grace the art collections in any private home, or be a credit to art exhibits in large eastern cities where fine art is recognized and appreciated.

Sara Lund (who is now Mrs. Bonney) was born in Canada in 1868. When a young child she moved with her parents, R. E. Lund, and [Sophronia (Ranous)?] Lund, to Greenville, Michigan, where she received her early education in the Greenville Public Schools and graduated in the Greenville Normal School.

After graduating, Sara Lund, with her parents and a sister, Maude and three brothers Fletcher, Bert, and Robert moved in 1886 to White Oaks, New Mexico for the benefit of the [h?] of her brother Bert.

Shortly after the arrival in New Mexico of the Lund family, 3 a new, large, one room, adobe school building having a stone foundation, wooden floors, and a shingle roof, was completed nearly a half a mile southeast, across the Hondo River from the village that is now the City of Roswell. This building replaced the first small sod covered, dirt floor, adobe structure erected in 1885, which was taught by Asbury C. Rogers, an attorney.

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A new teacher was needed for the larger and better school building, which was planned to serve as Sunday school, church, dance hall, and community gatherings of all kinds.

Judge Edmund T. Stone who settled in the Berrendo River district in 1878, on hearing of the arrival in New Mexico of Miss Sara Lund, "recently graduated", went to White Oaks, and secured her acceptance of the position of teacher of the new school. She accompanied him on his return to Roswell on the old Roswell Lincoln stage.

Sara Lund, happy and excited over the thoughts of the responsible and important position that awaited her at the end of what she hoped would be a journey of thrilling adventures, could eat no breakfast.

Arriving about noon, somewhere near [Picacho?], Judge Stone approached a man at a camp fire and asked if he would cook a few bites to eat for his young lady companion. The obliging camper consenting, placed a frying pan on a bed of hot coals, took a soiled red bandana handkerchief from his pocket and with it carefully wiped out the frying pan before placing in the meat. Needless to say, the hungry young traveler ate no lunch. Later, some food was obtained at the home of a widely known and respected 4 old German man, August Cline, whose kindly hospitality and generosity, caused many travelers to stop and enjoy a meal in his humble adobe home, presided over by a quiet, dark eyed, little Mexican housewife.

Another adventure of the journey to Roswell was caused by Judge Stone dumping the loudly protesting, drunken driver into the back of the stage coach, which he then drove into Roswell himself.

Miss Lund as the attractive and talented young lady teacher soon made many conquests and became a leader in all the pleasures and social gatherings in the Roswell community.

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She boarded in the home of Pat Garrett who had become famous as the sheriff who in 1881, rid the country by shooting the young desperado, William Bonney - who was better known as " Billy the Kid. "

Miss Lund and three Garrett children - her pupils - rode horseback to school from the Garrett ranch home, which was about three miles northeast from the new school house.

Some of the pupils (taught by Miss Lund) who grew up and became prominent Roswell citizens were: Will and Dick Ballard, Berta Ballard (Mrs. Jim Manning) Ann Ballard (Mrs. Jim Johnson) Sherman, Monte, and Fred Miller, Robert and George Corn, and Mintie Corn who married Charlie Ballard and the three Pat Garret children - Poe, Ida and Annie.

Soon after coming to Roswell Miss Sara Lund met C. D. Bonney, the interesting young, early day, Indian scout, who was 5 also a successful merchant and stock man, to whom she was married December 18, 1888. This happy event ended her career as teacher of the first Roswell District School.

Four children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Bonney, two boys Cecil (who lives in Roswell) and Don (who died in 1921) and two girls Elsie, who married Dr. J. J. Black and lives in New Jersey, and Doris, who is Mrs. Gerald [Shedinger?] living in Abeline, Kansas.

Mrs. Bonney is one of the popular leaders in the social life of Roswell. She is a member of the Presbyterian Church and belongs to the Roswell Woman's Club, Southwestern History Club, and Chaves County Archaeological and Historical Society.

Mr. and Mrs. Bonney who live at 406 South Pennsylvania Avenue, enjoy the [comforts?] and conveniences of a modern home and are surrounded by treasures and mementoes they have collected during the many years of their continuous residence in Roswell.

Many beautiful paintings created by the brush of Mrs. Bonney, hang on the walls of her home. Painting as an expression of her artistic temperament is a hobby enjoyed by her, and

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is appreciated by her Roswell friends and especially by her pupils, whom she taught in the first Roswell District School.

Source of Information

Mrs. C.D. Bonney in person-Roswell, New Mexico

Personal knowledge of writer.